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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/080,709	02/25/2002	Katsunari Ohsono	219973US3	8295

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EXAMINER

PALABRICA, RICARDO J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3641

DATE MAILED: 04/12/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/080,709	OHSONO ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Rick Palabrida	3641	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 1-12 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

- A: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 1-4 (e.g., see pages 12-15 of the specification).
- B: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 10 (e.g., see pages 25-26 of the specification).
- C: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 11 (e.g., see pages 26-28 of the specification).
- D: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 12A and 12B (e.g., see pages 28-29 of the specification).
- E: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 13A and 13B (e.g., see pages 29-31 of the specification).
- F: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 14A (e.g., see page 31 of the specification).
- G: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 14B (e.g., see page 31 of the specification).
- H: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 14C (e.g., see page 31 of the specification).

- I: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 15A and 15B (e.g., see page 31 of the specification).
- J: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 16A and 16B (e.g., see pages 31-32 of the specification).
- K: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 17-20 (e.g., see pages 32-33 of the specification).
- L: The embodiment as shown in Fig. 21 (e.g., see page 37 of the specification).
- M: The embodiment as shown in Figs. 22 and 23 (e.g., see pages 38-40 of the specification).

2. If either embodiment A is elected, applicant is further required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single species of the dummy pipe for purposes of examination.

This additional requirement is to facilitate examining due to the diverse pipe configurations disclosed as suitable (e.g., see the specification on pages 17-19).

3. If embodiment D is elected, applicant is further required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single species of the cast block for purposes of examination.

This additional requirement is to facilitate examining due to the diverse block configurations disclosed as suitable (e.g., see pages 28-29 of the specification).

Art Unit: 3641

4. Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, no claim appears generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rick Palabrica whose telephone number is 703-306-5756. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30, Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Carone can be reached on 703-306-4198. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-0285 for regular communications and 703-305-0285 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist, telephone number is 703-308-1113.

RJP
April 11, 2002



HARVEY E. BEHREND
PRIMARY EXAMINER